

From: Robert Schroeder
To: Microsoft ATR
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Subject: Microsoft Settlement

I am a software developer, that has worked with Microsoft products as well as on the java platform. It seems to me that there is an enormous misunderstanding of the software industry and an outdated use of the antitrust law. There are new issues that were left completely unaddressd as far as I can tell, and now it appears that this costly trial is taking another bad turn.

The overwhelming factor in Microsoft's 'monopoly' is the so-called network effect, something they took advantage of by being the most attractive to buyers. It is a natural state for Software Operating Systems. The consumers are much better off if most people use a single operating system, and most developers can code to a single api, as coding for two almost doubles the work.

Some are suggesting that Microsoft's API should then be locked down, so other people can copy it. There are several reasons that this is a bad idea. That API is changing, or rather, growing as quickly as the software industry is progressing, which at this moment is bigger than it ever has in any period in the past (and much bigger than the during the .com vaporware era). Microsoft needs to update its software to reflect this, and they need to do that quickly, and for a variety of reasons. It is also important that they are able to fix poor design, something they should finally be able to do with the versioning built into their new software.

By all means have Microsoft hire a special overseer to make sure they are in compliance, but please do not hamstring the software industry in the process. We are suffering enough in this economy as it is.

Thank you,
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